

nestling among the mountains of one of the northwest frontier provinces of India.

This is Quetta, one of the outposts of civilization established by the British Empire. Quetta lies at an elevation of 6,000 feet above the level of the sea.

More than twenty years ago David Fairchild, on one of his agricultural exploration trips, made the acquaintance of Lieut. W. L. Maxwell, an officer of the British Army. It turned out that Lieut. Maxwell was sent to Chaman, a military outpost a few miles beyond Quetta and right on the border of Afghanistan. In one of his letters, written in 1905, he says:

"Here I am within one and a half miles of the Afghan frontier with an Afghan fort only five miles away and in plain sight. We get lovely weather here in spring and autumn but the summers are hot and the winters are cold. Last winter I had two fingers frostbitten."

Lieut. Maxwell was asked to send in seeds and plants from this interesting region. Under date of April 12, 1906, he wrote:

"I fear I can do very little. You must give me explicit instructions regarding cuttings. I have sent you a tin full of good nectarine and peach seeds but I am sure you have far better ones. The only point in favor of them is that they stand cold, if that is any use, and they do not get much water, as no rain falls here from April to December. These seeds were taken from the best trees in Quetta. The summer temperatures of this region frequently reach 100° F. in the shade. Winter temperatures are known to drop below zero and severe frosts continue for weeks at a time."

Seeds were received March 24, 1906, and were sent to our Plant Introduction Garden at Chico, Calif. They were given our S.P.I. (Seed and Plant Introduction) number, 18235. A few years later, when the seedlings began to bear, one of them attracted particular attention. In 1912 a somewhat elaborate experiment was undertaken at the Chico Garden to determine the value of the Chinese peach, *Amygdalus davidiana*, for stock purposes. Among other fruits worked on this peach was the Quetta nectarine. In order to distinguish this particular seedling from the original lot, it was given a new S.P.I. number, 34685. This number it continues to bear.

The first general distribution of the Quetta nectarine was made in 1914. Distributions each year since that time have been widespread. Opportunity has therefore been given to test this fruit in nearly all parts of the United States where it is thought it might prove hardy. Numerous reports have been received as to its behavior; the majority of them speak favorably of it. Following are a few extracts from them:

"Am more than pleased to say that this nectarine has done well. It is now about 5 feet high and about 2 inches in diameter at the base. In the early fall of 1922 I took from the tree 118 large-sized nectarines which I measured and they averaged 7 inches in circumference." (Paul B. Posson, Sanger, Calif.)

"The Quetta nectarine sent to me five years ago is now a large thrifty tree and has had a full bloom every year beginning with the second year, so you see in this climate it stood the severe winters of 1917-1918 and 1918-1919 and is as hardy in bud as any of my peaches. I have not been successful in getting a crop of fruit owing to spring frosts." (William C. Degelman, Pittsburgh, Pa.)